

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) In an apparatus for receiving a multidimensional digital frame structure including a plurality of frames, a method for ~~variably programming the~~ synchronizing frames based upon a selected bit error rate of frame synchronization bytes, the method comprising:

accepting a command for selecting a bit error rate for frame synchronization bytes;

selecting a bit error rate in response to the command;

receiving a frame with an overhead section having a predetermined number of frame synchronization bytes; and

~~selecting the bit error rate for bytes in the overhead section~~

synchronizing the frame if the bit error rate of the frame synchronization bytes is less than or equal to the selected bit error rate;
otherwise,

not synchronizing the frame.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 1 wherein selecting the bit error rate ~~of the frame synchronization bytes~~ includes selecting an average bit error rate.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein receiving a frame includes receiving an overhead section including a first plurality of frame synchronization bytes; and

wherein selecting an average bit error rate includes selecting an average bit rate for the first plurality of frame synchronization bytes in each frame.

5. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein receiving a frame includes receiving a plurality of frames in a superframe; and

wherein selecting an average bit error rate includes selecting an average bit error rate for the frame synchronization bytes across a span of a superframe.

6. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein receiving a frame includes receiving a plurality of frames in a plurality of superframes; and

wherein selecting an average bit error rate includes selecting an average bit error rate for the frame synchronization bytes across a span of a plurality of superframes.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 1 further comprising:

~~supplying~~ accepting a bit error rate selection byte with a second plurality of bits; and

wherein selecting the bit error rate ~~of the frame synchronization bytes~~ includes selecting a bit error rate ~~responsive~~ in response to the bit error rate selection byte, in the range from zero to the second plurality of bit values.

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 1 wherein selecting ~~the~~ a bit error rate ~~of the frame synchronization bytes~~ includes independently selecting a bit error rate for each frame synchronization byte.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 1 wherein selecting ~~the~~ a bit error rate ~~for the frame synchronization bytes~~ includes selecting a first bit error rate and a second bit error rate.

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein selecting ~~the~~ a bit error rate ~~for the frame synchronization bytes~~ includes selecting a first error rate in a first frame and a second error rate in a second frame.

11-55. (Canceled)

56. (New) In an apparatus for receiving a multidimensional digital frame structure including a plurality of frames, a method for synchronizing frames based upon a selected bit error rate of frame synchronization bytes, the method comprising:

- accepting a command for selecting a quantity of frame synchronization bytes;

- selecting a quantity of frame synchronization bytes in response to the command;

- accepting a command for selecting a bit error rate for frame synchronization bytes;

- selecting an average bit error rate in response to the command;

- receiving a frame with an overhead section having a predetermined number of frame synchronization bytes; and

- synchronizing the frame if the average of the bit error rates of a quantity of frame synchronization bytes in the frame equal to the selected quantity of frame synchronization bytes is less than or equal to the selected average bit error rate; otherwise,

- not synchronizing the frame.

57. (New) In an apparatus for receiving a multidimensional digital frame structure including a plurality of frames, a method for synchronizing frames based upon a selected bit error rate of frame synchronization bytes, the method comprising:

accepting a command for selecting frame synchronization bytes;

accepting a command for selecting a bit error rate for frame synchronization bytes;

selecting a bit error rate for each frame synchronization byte selected in response to the command;

receiving a frame with an overhead section having a predetermined number of frame synchronization bytes;

selecting frame synchronization bytes in the frame in response to the command for selecting frame synchronization bytes; and

synchronizing the frame if the bit error rate of each selected frame synchronization byte is less than or equal to the bit error rate selected for the frame synchronization byte; otherwise,

not synchronizing the frame.